

**Douglas County School District**  
Regular Meeting  
Kingsbury Middle School  
Stateline, Nevada  
Tuesday, July 12, 2005  
3:30 p.m.

**Minutes Approved On:  
August 9, 2005**

## **MINUTES**

Present were:

**Trustees:**

Sharla Hales, President  
Connie Wennhold, Vice President  
Teri Jamin, Clerk  
Keith Roman, Member  
John Louritt, Member  
Ron Beck, Member  
Cynthia Trigg, Member

**Personnel:**

John Soderman, Superintendent  
Rick Kester, Director of Business Services  
Rich Alexander, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources  
Nancy Bryant, Assistant Superintendent, Education Services  
Janice Florey, Director of Grants and Assessments  
Norma Villasenor, Classified Personnel Director, Human Resources  
Lisa Fontana, Director of Curriculum and Instruction  
Susan Lacey, DCPEA President  
Richard Spence, DCSSO President

**Others Present:**

Mike Nivinskus, Legal Counsel

### **1. Call to Order**

Mrs. Hales called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.

- A. Mr. Beck led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- B. Mr. Louritt made a motion to adopt the agenda, seconded by Mr. Beck.

Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 7/0.

Mrs. Hales announced that Item number 3 on the agenda, "Appointment of Board Representatives," would be addressed before Item number 2, "Board Training."

### **3. Appointment of Board Representatives**

After a brief discussion, Mr. Beck volunteered to assume all of the appointments for which former Board Clerk Loren Orr was responsible.

Hearing no objections, Mrs. Hales appointed Mr. Beck to the following committees:

- A. Liaison Between Board and County Commission and Planning
- B. Expulsion Hearing Subcommittee
- C. Liaison to Carson Valley Chamber of Commerce

### **2. Board Training**

Ms. Jamin lead a Board training regarding how to avoid the most common Board member pitfalls gathered from information she received from the NSBA Conference in San Diego, California in April 2005. She offered advice on how effective Boards should communicate, and which practices should be avoided.

The Board thanked Ms. Jamin for her presentation.

### **4. Consent Items (Action)**

Mrs. Hales announced that Items 4-C, "Personnel Report No. 05-07" and 4-G, "Second Reading of Board Policies 508 - "Use of Medications," 529 - "Suspension and Expulsion," and Policy 529(a) - "Safe Schools, Weapons/ Fighting/Intimidation," would be pulled from the Consent Items for further discussion.

Mrs. Hales explained that since the Board would be addressing item 7-D, "Elimination of Elementary Spanish Program" later in the agenda, which could affect the Personnel Report, the Board would not vote to approve the personnel changes listed in Personnel Report number 05-07 until after that item was heard.

Mr. Louritt announced that he would abstain from voting on Item 4-C, "Personnel Report No. 05-07," because of a conflict of interest as his wife is transferring to the position of Bookkeeper.

Mrs. Wennhold made a motion to approve the following consent items, with the exception of Items 4-C and 4-G, seconded by Ms. Jamin.

- A. Approve the Minutes of the Regular Board meeting held on June 14, 2005.
- B. Approve the Minutes of the Special Board meeting held on June 21, 2005.
- D. Approve payments contained in Voucher No. 1046 for the 2004-2005 fiscal year.
- E. Excuse from compulsory attendance the students described in the Home School Report for July 2005.
- F. Approve the request submitted by Steven Charles Kruse to take the GED examination.
- H. Adopt the District's updated debt management plan and updated Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan.
- I. Award a contract for the construction of a new food service freezer at the District's warehouse as specified in the bid summary to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder meeting District specifications. Funding to come from the 2005-06 capital projects fund.

Mrs. Hales called for public comment. There was none.

Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 7/0.

#### **4-G, Second reading of Board Policies 508 - "Use of Medications," 529 - "Suspension and Expulsion," and Policy 529(a) - "Safe Schools, Weapons/ Fighting/Intimidation."**

Mrs. Hales called for Board discussion on this item.

Mr. Roman began the discussion by cautioning the Board that they should leave no room in these policies for misinterpretation regarding the use of prescription or over the counter medications.

Mr. Soderman responded that he was confident that the policies as revised accurately and concisely reflect the district's expectations regarding the use of prescription medications, regardless of the classification.

Mrs. Trigg reminded the Board that at the June 2005 meeting, the subject of students' administering their own insulin was discussed, but not incorporated into the revised policies.

Mrs. Bryant explained that while students may administer their own insulin under adult supervision, the insulin and equipment used to administer the insulin must be delivered to the school nurse or, in the case of an athlete, the coach. State law made concessions for the use and possession of Epi Pens and inhalers, but not insulin.

Mrs. Trigg asked if NIAA rules have any provisions for students requiring insulin. Mrs. Bryant committed researching NIAA rules regarding athletes requiring insulin.

Mr. Beck suggested that the wording on policies 508, 529, and 529(a) that addressed the length of suspension be revised to state, "...must be suspended from school up to ten (10) days **pending a hearing before the Board**..." He explained that the change would allow more flexibility.

Mr. Louritt suggested that the Medical Assistance Request should indicate that medications are to be delivered to the school nurse or other trained designated personnel during school functions as well as during the school day.

Mrs. Hales called for public comment. There was none.

After further discussion, Mrs. Wennhold made a motion to approve for second reading and adopt Board Policies 508 - "Use of Medications," 529 - "Suspension and Expulsion," and policy 529(a) - "Safe Schools, Weapons/Fighting/Intimidation with the suggested changes in wording, seconded by Mr. Roman.

Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 7/0.

## **5. Administrative Reports and Program Reviews**

### **5-A. Principal's Report (Jacobsen High School)**

Dr. Janice Florey, principal of Jacobsen High School, shared data to indicate progress toward their School Improvement Plan goals. One goal was to have every student gain at least one grade level in four months. She explained that JHS is a school for adjudicated youths and that their students live on

site at the “Camp” for only about four months. She further explained how JHS works closely with the Camp to best serve the educational needs of their students during their brief enrollment at JHS.

She described some of the programs in place to enhance student achievement, such as WebQuest, which is an inquiry-oriented activity in which some or all of the information that learners interact with comes from resources on the Internet. In addition, new geometry and algebra units were developed in the area of math.

She pointed out that during a visit from the Assistant Superintendent of Education Services and the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, who visited JHS in 2003-2004 to provide an assessment, student engagement was found to be an area in need of improvement. Various methodologies were used to improve student engagement, such as using a theme (the students chose disease as the theme) in which students presented research and designed PowerPoint presentations.

Dr. Florey provided data that indicated improvement in the areas of reading, language, math, and science, over a four-month period. She explained that JHS usually has their students for only four months, at which time they return to their mainstream school. It is the goal of JHS to provide the best educational experience possible to students during this brief period of enrollment.

In the area of parent involvement, efforts were made to contact parents by mail to explain how they could assist their child in re-entering the mainstream. This correspondence was generated because it was found that schools were not requesting the students’ cumulative records from JHS. This correspondence was expected to generate more requests for cumulative records because the parents would understand the procedure for supplying the information to the new school, but most of the letters to parents were returned. Next year, JHS staff will be working more closely with Camp staff to ensure that the current mailing address is correct.

Dr. Florey thanked the Director of Business Services, Rick Kester, for his attention to the JHS facility and offered exemplars of student work for the Board’s perusal.

After questions from the Board, Dr. Florey was congratulated for her evident success in reaching the goals of her School Improvement Plan.

#### **5-B. Report on Achievement Level Test Results**

Dr. Florey updated the Board on the administration of the District’s achievement level tests (ALTs) and addressed the issues of growth and proficiency as they relate to the ALTs. She explained that the ALTs are a very effective indicator of growth over time and that principals find this longitudinal data very helpful in assessing the needs of their students.

She shared data to illustrate that all grade levels tested (grades 5, 8, 11, and 12) are rising from year to year, and that an analysis of Criterion Referenced Test results will determine if the target score will be raised.

After questions from the Board, Mrs. Hales thanked Dr. Florey for the update on ALT test score results.

## **6. Information and Discussion**

### **6-A. Superintendent’s Report**

Superintendent John Soderman reported to the Board regarding activities of the past month and

upcoming District events that might be of interest to them. He mentioned that the Leadership Team Forum to be held July 27 – 29 in Mammoth Lakes, California, would focus on classroom observation protocol and “Teach for Success.” He also reminded the Board of the District picnic which is scheduled for August 25.

He announced that all schools were found to have made Adequate Yearly Progress, and Zephyr Cove Elementary and Kingsbury Middle schools test results indicate that they will achieve “High Achieving” status as defined by the “No Child Left Behind” Act. George Whittell will achieve “Exemplary” status, which means that proficiency rates rose significantly.

Mrs. Hales informed the Board that the Nevada Association of School Boards voted to secede from the national organization in order to devote their attention and resources to hiring a full time director.

Mrs. Hales called for a brief recess at 5:00 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 5:18 p.m.

## **7. Items Requiring Discussion and Action (Action)**

### **7-A. Determination of the Use of the Proceeds of the Recent 14.97 Acre Land Sale**

Mr. Kester reminded the Board that on June 14, 2005, escrow closed on the sale of 14.97 acres of land adjacent to Piñon Hills Elementary School. The \$1,500,000.00 selling price yielded net sale proceeds of \$1,495,933.00 to the District after deducting escrow costs on the sale of \$4,067.00. The proceeds of the sale have been deposited in the District’s building and sites fund as required by N.R.S. 393.320. N.R.S. 387.177 specifies creation of the building and sites fund and defines the composition of the fund and the funds allowable expenditures as only those budgeted expenditures for the purposes enumerated in N.R.S. 387.335 and no others (those expenditures for which school bonds may be used).

Mr. Kester invited the Board to offer suggestions on specific projects or expenditures for which it would like to see these funds appropriated.

Mr. Roman inquired as to the status of the all-weather track project and if the money set aside by the district (\$200,000) might not be needed for this project.

Mr. Kester answered that Mr. Cole, who is a teacher and track coach at Douglas High School, was able to raise approximately \$90,000, and another \$70,000 - \$90,000 in “in kind” contributions, such as heavy equipment donations. Mr. Cole is currently waiting for a response to his request for donations from two foundations as well. Currently, the District is in the process of meeting with engineers to fashion a bid for the project. He stated that his research indicated that an all-weather track is not easy to build, is expensive to maintain, and has a myriad of other pitfalls. A meeting is planned with an expert from Seattle, Washington, to assist in choosing the best specifications for the track.

Ms. Jamin mentioned that money should be set aside for facility modifications should the Lake enrollment continue to decline and consolidation of the Lake schools becomes necessary.

Mr. Beck asked Mr. Kester if the HVAC and roof replacement projects already in the Capital Improvement Plan should be advanced.

Mr. Kester answered that the current placement in the timeline for these projects is sufficient and do not need to be advanced.

Mrs. Wennhold and Mr. Louritt offered that they would like to see the ROTC program established. Mr. Kester noted their suggestion.

Mr. Louritt asked where the money resides while a determination of its use is made. Mr. Kester answered that the District uses the local government investment pools, which earns interest at the current interest rate (about 3 percent).

Mrs. Hales commented that it appeared the ROTC project is a high priority to the Board, and thanked Mr. Kester for his guidance in this matter. She noted that the only other option put forward for these funds was to build an elementary school pod to decrease the number of teams teaching and requested information regarding team teaching.

Mrs. Hales called for public comment.

Kelly Ferris and Sue Scharer asked for assurance that the Lake schools' consolidation needs be given priority if consolidation is necessary. Mr. Kester assured her that the District would not commit funds to any other project until the Lake schools' needs were met in the event it is necessary to consolidate schools at Lake Tahoe.

Mr. Roman asked Mr. Kester to prepare an overview of the suggestions presented by the Board for a future Board meeting.

Mr. Kester committed to returning in September with a synopsis of the suggestions presented.

The Board took no action on this item.

#### **7-B. Approval of Meet and Confer Agreement with the Douglas County Administrators Association for 2005-2006**

Mr. Alexander, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, provided an overview of the agreements reached by the Douglas County Administrators Association as follows:

1. One-year agreement for the 2005-06 school year only.
2. A two percent (2.25%) salary increase, which includes the .25% PERS adjustment, will be reflected in the administrative base salary schedule for 2005-06.
3. The District will pay for employee health benefits.
4. Currently employed administrators in declining enrollment schools will maintain the 2004-05 responsibility factors used to determine salary.
5. This agreement is subject to ratification by the Douglas County School Board.

Mr. Alexander explained that the one-year agreement was recommended so that the DCAA could perform a comparability study of salaries, and that the study would be funded from their own contributions.

Mrs. Hales called for public comment. There was none.

Mr. Beck made a motion to approve the Meet and Confer Agreement with the Douglas County Administrators Association for the 2005-2006 school year, seconded by Mr. Louritt.

Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 7/0.

**7-C. Approval of Negotiated Agreement with the Douglas County School Bus Drivers, Chapter 6 of the Nevada Classified School Employees and Public Workers Association, AFT/PRSP Local 6181**

Ms. Villaseñor, Director of Classified Personnel, and Dick Spence, president of Douglas County School Bus Drivers Association presented the results of the negotiations with the Douglas County Bus Drivers Association where the following agreement was reached:

1. Salary - Article X: 2.25% for employer-paid PERS and 2.00% for employer-employee paid PERS salary increase for 2005-2006; 4% salary increase for 2006-2007.
2. Physical Exam - 13-3: Increase covered cost of one annual physical exam up to \$300.00 for each contracted driver consistent with the annual physical exam benefit in the District health plan.
3. Insurance 15-2: District will pay \$533.25 of employee's insurance premium for 2005-06 and any increase in the cost above insurance premium for the 2006-07 school year.
4. Term of Agreement 18-1: Two years.

Ms. Villaseñor commented that the bus drivers are always a reasonable group who are very easy to work with.

Mrs. Hales called for public comment. There was none.

Mrs. Wennhold made a motion to approve the changes in the Negotiated Agreement reached by the parties for the 2005-2007 school years and ratify a new Negotiated Agreement for 2005-07 for the bus drivers, seconded by Mrs. Trigg.

Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 7/0.

**Public Comment**

At 6:00 p.m., Mrs. Hales read a statement acknowledging the concerns expressed at recent Board meetings by members of the audience regarding the administration at George Whittell High School. She then called for public comment.

Rick Gardner commented that test results in small schools tend to skew the results in testing and that the administration is not necessarily responsible for students' test results. He mentioned his recent meeting with Mr. Soderman and thanked him for addressing his concerns personally.

Nancy Gardner began to read a prepared statement regarding her concerns about the administration at George Whittell High School. Due to time restraints, she was unable to complete her statement. Mrs. Hales invited her to return next month if she wished to do so. Mrs. Gardner elected to return at the next meeting to complete her statement.

Heather Kuehner asked if the person hired for the math position at GWHS (Cecilia Lathe) was any relation to Cecilia Vaughn.

Mr. Alexander responded that they are not related.

Kelly Gardner expressed her frustration with the administration at George Whittell High School.

**7-D. Elimination of Elementary Spanish Program**

Mr. Kester explained the District's difficult budget situation for the 2005-2006 school year, which necessitated the elimination of the K-6 Elementary Spanish program. He said that unfunded legislative mandates, the loss of 14 school busses, salary and health benefit increases, rising utility costs, are just some of the reasons why this program can no longer be financially supported.

Mrs. Bryant explained that an elementary Spanish program is not common among elementary schools in Nevada, and is somewhat of a luxury. She acknowledged that the Spanish assistants hired to oversee this program are quality employees, but an examination of the program revealed that it was not consistent with the original goals and that the program reduces much needed instructional time in critical areas such as math and reading.

Mrs. Villaseñor clarified that the seven teaching assistants currently employed as Spanish assistants have been notified of the possible program elimination per the negotiated agreement and many were placed in other positions either within or outside the district.

Mrs. Trigg asked Mr. Kester and Mrs. Bryant if parents were surveyed about the effectiveness of the program for their children.

She explained that although the parents were not surveyed, only 17 percent of the students participating in the program were found to be proficient at the mid-novice level, which was far below expectations. She further explained that Foreign Language is still offered at the secondary level.

After questions and further discussion from the Board, Mr. Kester warned that if this program were not eliminated, other programs would need to be considered for elimination due to ongoing budgetary issues.

Mrs. Hales called for public comment.

Buffy Stockton, a foreign language teacher at Carson Valley Middle School, described the benefits of teaching Spanish at an early age. Her students who have previously participated in the program are far more advanced than students who did not participate in Spanish at the elementary level. She asked the Board to research other means by which to make budgetary cuts.

Tracy Cummings, Heather Howell, Sue Scharer, and Kate Warner, as well as other audience members addressed the Board regarding the enjoyment their children experience from the program and the benefits evident from participation in the program.

The Board asked the Administration about the possibility of stipends to support this program. Mr. Kester and Mr. Soderman responded that all sites receive an allotment of stipends to use as they see fit, and warned that clubs and parent organizations are prohibited from hiring employees.

After further discussion, Mr. Roman made a motion to eliminate the K-6 Spanish program starting in the 2005-2006 school year and provide a Spanish stipend at each elementary school for \$750 (above the existing stipend allocation) to be used for Spanish education only, seconded by Ms. Jamin.

After further discussion, the Board expressed their sympathy to those affected by the elimination of the Spanish program.

Motion carried by a vote of 5/2 (Mr. Louritt and Mrs. Trigg, dissenting.)

#### **7-E. Board/Superintendent Goals for 2005-2006**

Mr. Soderman presented his Board/Superintendent Goals for 2005-2006, which were prepared following the June 21, 2005, Special Board meeting to evaluate his performance. The first two of the three proposed goals are based on the Competency and Graduation Strategy of the Strategic Plan. The remaining goals incorporate a number of issues that Board members have indicated they would like to see explored and/or implemented for the District during the 2005-2006 school year.

Mrs. Hales expressed her concern about the high turnover rate of principals at Douglas High School.

Mr. Soderman committed to incorporating her concerns into his goals.

After a brief discussion, Ms. Jamin made a motion to approve the three Board/Superintendent Goals for 2005-2006 as augmented, seconded by Mr. Roman.

Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 7/0.

Board counsel Mike Nivinskus reminded the Board that no action had yet been taken on Item 4-C, "Personnel Report No. 05-07."

#### **4-C. Personnel Report No. 05-07**

Mrs. Hales called for public comment. There was none.

Mrs. Wennhold made a motion to approve the personnel actions described in Personnel Report No. 05-07, seconded by Mr. Beck.

Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 7/0.

### **8. Correspondence**

Mrs. Trigg shared that she received a letter from Mrs. Romaneshe. Mrs. Bryant assured the Board that she was aware of and dealing with the matter. Mrs. Trigg committed to providing copies of the letter to the Board.

Mrs. Hales announced that she received a letter from Mr. Halford and that she would provide copies for the Board.

### **9. Possible Agenda Items for Future Board Meetings**

Mrs. Trigg asked that the issue of providing directory information to the military be addressed at a future Board meeting, supported by Mr. Beck.

### **10. Executive Session**

At 8:35 p.m., Mrs. Wennhold made a motion to recess to executive session as agendized, seconded by Mrs. Trigg.

With a motion made in executive session to return to public session, Mrs. Trigg made the following motion:

"Because it is in the best financial interest of the district, and because it is this superintendent's last year, I move that we increase Mr. Soderman's 2005-2006 salary by the

amount he is entitled to per Board Policy 332, Early Incentive Retirement, reduced by the PERS rate and 25 percent, with no other salary increase available to him for 2005-2006 and no early retirement incentive due him upon his retirement June 30, 2006, and have his contract reflect these changes.”

Motion seconded by Mrs. Wennhold.

Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 7/0.

## 11. Adjournment

At 9:40 p.m., Mrs. Wennhold made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Jamin.

Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 7/0.

Submitted by:

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Rebecca C. Winter  
Secretary to the Superintendent and  
Board of Trustees

Approved:

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Clerk of the Board

Note: Upon approval by the Board of Trustees in a public meeting, these minutes become the official minutes of the meeting held on the above date. Board minutes are kept on a permanent basis and are available for public review in the office of the Superintendent.